

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A method of detecting a bio-emergency, the method comprising:
receiving patient health information at a plurality of health care facilities regarding each of a plurality of patients,
-the patient health information being received at each health care facility via a user interface executed on at least one computer;
upon receiving the patient health information regarding each of the plurality of patients,
automatically transmitting, simultaneously with said receiving step, the patient health information from the computer at the health care facility to a monitoring computer within a bio-surveillance network;-and
upon receiving the patient health information at the monitoring computer, compiling the patient health information on the monitoring computer to create compiled health data; and
analyzing the health data compiled within the bio-surveillance network to identify whether a public health threat exists.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the bio-surveillance network includes at least one regional repository that communicates directly with at least one of the health care facilities.
3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the regional repository is a state health department.
4. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the at least one regional repository includes a plurality of regional repositories.
5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein said compiling step is performed at the regional repositories.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, further comprising communicating the compiled health data to at least one group including the regional repositories and a centralized recipient.
7. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the bio-surveillance network includes a centralized recipient that receives the compiled health care data from at least one of the regional repositories.
8. (Currently amended) The method of claim 7, further wherein the step of analyzing the compiled health data comprises ~~comprising~~ comparing the compiled health data to a threshold.
9. (Currently amended) The method of claim 8, further comprising generating a warning signal in response to said comparing step indicating the public health threat exists.
10. (Original) The method of claim 9, further comprising communicating the warning signal to at least one of a group including the health care facilities, a law enforcement agency, a health department, and a hospital network.
11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said communicating the warning signal is performed automatically in response to said comparing step.
12. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the centralized recipient is the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).
13. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the patient health information includes triage information.
14. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the triage information includes symptom information.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the triage information includes a primary complaint.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein the triage information includes a secondary complaint.

17. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising categorizing the symptom information.

18. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~1~~17, wherein said categorizing step includes generating syndromic data.

19. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said receiving step is performed using proprietary software.

20. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said transmitting step is implemented via an Internet.

21. (Currently amended) A method of detecting a bio-emergency, the method comprising:
receiving individual triage patient health information at a plurality of health care facilities

~~from~~regarding each of a plurality of patients;

on a patient-by-patient basis, electronically recording triage data for that patient in a computer of the associated health care facility, the triage data ~~for~~regarding each patient containing at least some of the received health information for that patient;

upon recording the triage data ~~for~~regarding each patient, transmitting at least a portion of the recorded triage data to a computer for one of a plurality of regional repositories automatically and in at least near real-time, the computer for each of the regional repositories receiving triage data from a computer for each of a plurality of the health care facilities;

transmitting triage data to a computer for a centralized recipient from the computers for regional repositories automatically and in at least near real time with its receipt from the computers for the health care facilities;

analyzing the triage data and determining, based on the analysis, whether a possible bio-emergency exists;

communicating, from the centralized recipient, information regarding the possible bio-emergency to at least one of one or more of the regional repositories, one or more of the health care facilities, and other institutions having an interest in responding to a possible bio-emergency.

22. (Currently amended) The method as recited in claim 21, further comprising
| compiling the triage data ~~for~~regarding individual patients to generate volumetric triage
data (VTD);
| comparing the volumetric triage data with a predetermined threshold; and
| transmitting a warning in response to said comparing step.

23. (Original) The method as recited in claim 22, wherein the compiling step is performed by the computer for the regional repositories, and the comparing step is performed by the computer for the centralized recipient.

24. – 26. (Canceled)

27. (New) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the monitoring computer continuously compiles patient health information as it is received and the bio-surveillance network continuously analyzes the compiled information to identify whether the public health threat exists.